

HOUSE No. 1465

By Mr. Rushing of Boston, petition of Byron Rushing and others for an investigation by a special commission (including members of the General Court) relative to ending homelessness in the Commonwealth. Children and Families.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PETITION OF:

| | |
|------------------------|---------------------|
| Byron Rushing | Bruce E. Tarr |
| Martha M. Walz | Anne M. Paulsen |
| Timothy J. Toomey, Jr. | Alice K. Wolf |
| Kay Khan | Pamela P. Resor |
| Douglas W. Petersen | Anthony J. Verga |
| Ellen Story | Gloria L. Fox |
| Deborah D. Blumer | Frank I. Smizik |
| Carl M. Sciortino, Jr. | Elizabeth A. Malia |
| Gale D. Candaras | Kathleen M. Teahan |
| Cory Atkins | Patricia D. Jehlen |
| Denis Guyer | Susan C. Tucker |
| Ruth B. Balser | Peter J. Koutoujian |
| David Paul Linsky | Dianne Wilkerson |

In the Year Two Thousand and Five.

RESOLVE PROVIDING FOR AN INVESTIGATION AND PLAN BY A SPECIAL COMMISSION RELATIVE TO ENDING HOMELESSNESS IN THE COMMONWEALTH.

1 *Resolved*, That a special commission to consist of 6 members
2 of the Senate, one of whom shall be a member of the minority
3 party, 6 members of the house of representatives, 1 of whom shall
4 be a member of the minority party, the secretary of health and
5 human services or his designee, the director of housing and com-
6 munity development or his designee, the secretary of administra-
7 tion and finance or his designee, the commissioner of correction

8 or his designee, and 5 persons to be appointed by the governor,
9 one of whom shall be the president of the Massachusetts Sheriffs'
10 Association, 2 of whom shall be housing advocates and 2 of
11 whom shall be homeless advocates, be established.

12 Said commission shall develop a 5 year comprehensive housing
13 plan to end homelessness in the commonwealth and include, but
14 not be limited to, a compilation and analysis of the following
15 information: (1) a determination of the number of units required
16 by geographic area to house homeless individuals and families;
17 (2) the coordination of discharge planning from correctional,
18 mental health and other institutions and the types of housing sup-
19 port systems required to ease or end homelessness; (3) recommen-
20 dations relative to the establishment of a program of coordinated
21 community support services designed to enable homeless individ-
22 uals and families to move towards independence and self-suffi-
23 ciency; provided, however, that community support services shall
24 include, but not be limited to, the case management of individual
25 and family integration or reintegration into independent commu-
26 nity living; and to identify the number of housing units affordable
27 to very low-income and extremely low-income households
28 according to the definition by the United States Department of
29 Housing and Urban Development or a successor agency.

30 The coordinated services that the commission shall analyze as a
31 part of an individual or family living plan designed to ease or
32 eliminate homelessness shall include, but not be limited to, adult
33 education, employment training and placement, family stabiliza-
34 tion and reunification services, the Head Start program, child care
35 and after-school services, substance abuse and mental health
36 counseling and treatment, primary and preventive health care ser-
37 vices, post-criminal justice rehabilitation and reintegration ser-
38 vices, housing and rental assistance, energy and conservation
39 assistance, group adult foster care and other elder home care ser-
40 vices and nutrition.

41 For the purposes of this commission, "homelessness" shall
42 mean the condition of a person who lacks a sanitary and safe 24
43 hour residence and who has a primary nighttime residence that is
44 a supervised publicly or privately operated shelter designed to
45 provide temporary living accommodations including, but not lim-
46 ited to, the following: welfare hotels, congregate shelters, transi-

47 tional housing or a facility, institution, structure or dwelling that
48 provides a temporary residence for individuals in need of custo-
49 dial care and any public or private place not designed for, or ordi-
50 narily used as, regular living accommodations.

51 Said commission. shall report to the general court the results of
52 its investigation and study, including a timeline for implementa-
53 tion, cost estimates and finance mechanisms and its recommenda-
54 tions, if any, together with drafts of legislation necessary to carry
55 its recommendations into effect by filing the same with the clerk
56 of the house of representatives, who shall forward the same to the
57 joint committee on housing and urban development and the house
58 and senate committees on ways and means on or before the last
59 Wednesday of December, 2005.